

Claims

- [c1] A device comprising:
memory storing a network device name; and
an interface that may be connected to a network device such that the network device name stored in the memory may be loaded into the network device and utilized by the network device in communications across a network.
- [c2] The invention of claim 1 wherein the network device name comprises a digital representation of an alphanumeric name.
- [c3] The invention of claim 2 wherein the alphanumeric name is displayed on the exterior of the device.
- [c4] The invention of claim 1 wherein the network device name comprises a digital representation of a pictorial icon.
- [c5] The invention of claim 4 wherein the pictorial icon is displayed on the exterior of the device.
- [c6] The invention of claim 1 wherein the network device associates the network device name with its network address.
- [c7] The invention of claim 1 wherein the memory also stores a unique identifier.
- [c8] The invention of claim 7 wherein the unique identifier may be utilized as a network address in the network.
- [c9] The invention of claim 7 wherein the unique identifier is obtained from communication with a remote database.
- [c10] The invention of claim 1 further comprising a display capable of displaying the network address stored in the memory of the device.
- [c11] The invention of claim 1 wherein the interface further comprises a connector which can be plugged into an interface on the network device.
- [c12] The invention of claim 11 wherein the interface on the network device is a

serial interface on the network device.

- [c13] The invention of claim 1 wherein the network is an Ethernet network.
- [c14] A method of addressing a network device comprising:
establishing a connection between the network device and a tag storing a network device name;
loading the network device name stored in the tag into the network device;
and
configuring the network device to utilize the network device name in communications across a network.
- [c15] The invention of claim 14 wherein the step of configuring the network device further comprises the step of storing an association between the network device name and an address for the network device in a translation table.
- [c16] The invention of claim 15 wherein the address for the network device is also stored in the tag.
- [c17] The invention of claim 14 wherein the network device name comprises a digital representation of an alphanumeric name.
- [c18] The invention of claim 17 wherein the alphanumeric name is displayed on the exterior of the device.
- [c19] The invention of claim 14 wherein the network device name comprises a digital representation of a pictorial icon.
- [c20] The invention of claim 19 wherein the pictorial icon is displayed on the exterior of the device.
- [c21] The invention of claim 14 wherein the network is an Ethernet network.
- [c22] A method for use with an addressable network device comprising:
generating a network device name which may be utilized by the network device in communications across a network;
storing the network device name in a tag which may be connected to the network device such that the network device name may be loaded into the

network device and utilized to configure the network device.

- [c23] The invention of claim 22 wherein the network device name comprises a digital representation of an alphanumeric name.
- [c24] The invention of claim 23 wherein the alphanumeric name is displayed on the exterior of the device.
- [c25] The invention of claim 22 wherein the network device name comprises a digital representation of a pictorial icon.
- [c26] The invention of claim 25 wherein the pictorial icon is displayed on the exterior of the device.
- [c27] The invention of claim 14 wherein the network is an Ethernet network.